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A GLANCE AT THE HIGHLANDS OF ABERDEENSHIRE.

WE usually think of the Highlands of Scotland as one range of hilly country, extending, with little variety of character, from Dumbarton to Cape-Wrath. When it is carefully travelled over and examined, we discover great local differences. Perthshire, for example, is beautiful; Ross-shire, savagely grand; Inverness-shire, something between. A birch-feathered lake in Breadalbane or Monteath, is a totally different thing from a wilderness of bare quartz and sandstone in Assynt. The hopeless, heart-depressing moor of Rannoch can never be compared with the lovely openings of Glen Morrison and Glen Urquhart on the line of the Caledonian Canal. Even in the quality of *mountainousness*, from which the entire district takes its name, some parts are strikingly unlike others. Much of the Highlands, indeed, presents only very moderate elevations—generally under 2000 feet. Hills of above 3000 occur only in certain limited districts, as the north of Perthshire, the head of Aberdeenshire, and western Ross and Sutherlandshire. The famed Ben Nevis itself, 4408 feet above the sea, the loftiest summit in the island, rises in a territory generally composed of moderately high hills, and is therefore, indeed, the more conspicuous.

It so happens, from considerations of convenience, and the prevalent desire of seeing scenery merely pretty, that some of the grandest elevations of the Highlands are little visited, and even now are little known. Few make their way north of the Great Glen in Inverness-shire, or diverge to the eastward of Badenoch; and yet true it is, that there is nothing which will compare in the qualities which inspire awe and terror, with the battalion of colossal mountains extending along the west coast of Ross and Sutherland; while, beyond all doubt, the nucleus of the Grampian range is to be sought in Aberdeenshire. There we see a tract of fully thirty miles, containing as many mountains of above 3500 feet as are perhaps to be found in all the rest of Scotland, exclusive of the district just named. Among these are Ben Muiedhni, the second in the island, being 4290 feet; Ben Main; Ben-y-Vrackie; Cairngorm; and Loch-na-Gar—all of them magnificent examples of rudeness, grandeur, and sublimity. A very large part of this territory has never been subjected to any ordinary economic use, as the rearing of sheep or cattle; it is still a deer-forest, as it was in the earliest times; yielding no rental, except as a field of one of the hardest and most ancient sports.

If the reader will glance over a map of Scotland, he will quickly pick out a spot called Castleton of

Braemar, in the western part of Aberdeenshire. It is a simple village, about 1100 feet above the sea, seated on the right bank of the Dee, and nearly in the midst of the alpine region which has been described. Here, in 1715, the Earl of Mar raised the standard of rebellion against the newly seated dynasty of Brunswick; and here will now be occasionally seen the royal family, mingling with the homely crowd of a fair, and amusing themselves with a sight of the toy-booths and stalls of lollipops and gingerbread. From the door of Mrs Clark's inn, one sees the grandest of the group of mountains, as from the Hôtel de Londres at Chamouni you see Mont Blanc and the Flegere. You see them, perhaps, in a humid day, wreathed in mist, and provokingly unapproachable: no resource but to turn in and try to enjoy the comfortable inn parlour, in hopes of better weather to-morrow. Such was my fate—such is the fate of everybody who sets himself to see Scotch mountains. He posts himself in the nearest inn, laying siege, as it were, to the mountain, and captures it the first fine day—if he can wait sufficiently long. I have, for my part, made three expeditions in as many years to a particular mountain, only carrying it in the last. And it is told of Dr Macculloch, the geologist, that he visited the Cuchullin Hills, in Skye, eight years in succession, and never saw them except from a boat after all. It is a fine exercise for patience, your regular Scotch mountain.

I am bound in candour to admit, that my *second* visit to this district was successful. My approach was as the supposed rider of a pony, through the celebrated valley of Glen Tilt; that is to say, I hired a pony at Blair, along with a guide, and, tiring of its slow and uneasy motion, walked most of the way. It is a long, straight, narrow glen, altogether without human inhabitants, and with only a rude track for the lonely traveller. It takes you back to the primitive days of mankind when you enter this extensive wilderness, devoted only to deer, and think that unless you can make out thirty miles of travelling, you have no chance of any bed for the night, except one upon the open heath. The only relief which I experienced in my journey from the most absolute solitude, was, when about half-way, I came to a small platform of green land, in the angle formed by the incoming of a side-stream, and backed by a lofty rock, half covered with ivy and moss. Here I found two journeyers like myself, but who had come the contrary way, with a pony and guide, and were now taking a rest and lunch. The gentlemen, being in Highland costume, formed a picturesque group, and I gladly came to a halt by their side. Flasks, sandwiches, and cigars were brought out. The ponies and guides formed a subordinate group at a little distance.

With the streams tumbling and sparkling at our feet, and the cool shade of the rock behind, amidst light chat, gradually ripening to merriment, an hour passed agreeably away. The whole was like a scene in *Don Quixote* or *Gil Blas*, where there is always a bag containing a store of bread and onions, if nothing better, besides a long-necked leather-bottle, which passes round the company till it gets exhausted by their embraces. Finally, we bade each other adieu, and proceeded on our several routes.

I was followed by rain all that day, but always kept a little before it, till near the last, when at length it overtook me. Just as I entered the inn at Castleton, the night descended, and the rain began to fall in torrents. It lasted all next day, except a few intervals too brief to be of any service. But, prepared for such a contingency, I waited patiently to see what the next again should bring forth. Perseverance was rewarded with a bright morning, and I made instant arrangements for attacking Ben-Muicdhui. A currie and a guide being soon in readiness, I set out for a gamekeeper's house nine miles off, where it is customary to commence the walking part of the expedition.

The first part of our course lay along the bank of the Dee, even here a majestic river, without any regard to the fine mountains rising by its side. Crossing by a modern wooden-bridge, we enter the park of Mar Lodge, a plain old mansion, noted only as the highest in the valley. Then, leaving all reasonable roads, we ascend by a rude path through the pine-forest to a considerable altitude on the mountain-side, enduring all degrees of jolting by the way, short of being absolutely propelled from the vehicle. Some of the trees remind us, by their great magnitude, of those of Norway. Another feature recalling that country, is the multitude of ants' hillocks to be seen scattered about. Here and there, a patriarch of the forest, overthrown by the blasts, lies on its side, with a mass of root turned up on edge, not much less than the gable-wall of a house. By and by, we get clear of the woods, and begin to ascend a bare and elevated valley called Glen Lui, where one can see, from the ruins of cottages, that there has been a population, though all is loneliness now. A few miles of this, and we arrive at the gamekeeper's cottage, the only human habitation, I believe, within a very wide circuit of country.

Leaving my vehicle and its conductor here, I had to address myself to a toilsome walk of nine miles along rough valleys, and corries, and mountain-sides, in order to reach the summit of Ben Muicdhui. The way is thus circuitous, partly for the sake of easy ascent, and partly because by this way the traveller gives the least possible disturbance to the deer—these forming an interest in Braemar, to which everything else must give place. My guide, a vigorous lad of three-and-twenty, led the way into a side-vale called Glen Derry, which I soon found to be one of considerable geological interest. At intervals of from half a mile to a mile, there occur huge masses of rough detritus, generally lying right across the valley, excepting that there is always a wide gap through which the rivulet finds its way. They are barriers, as it were, partly broken down. Using a hand-level, I found, in a rough way, that one of these barriers is no less than 130 feet high. The composition is a coarse, angular gravel, with great numbers of large blocks bristling along the surface. No one, so far as I am aware, has as yet taken

notice of them, and one finds no similar objects adverted to in the works of British geologists. Yet their history is abundantly manifest to any one who has ever travelled among the Alps. They are, in short, ancient *moraines*—the memorials of a condition of lower temperature in long by-past time, when each mountain region of considerable elevation in Scotland was above the line of perpetual snow, and had its valleys, of course, filled with glaciers. It is a circumstance invariably attending a glacier, that it raises along its sides, and leaves at its extremity, lines of rubbish or detritus—a *moraine*—which it has carried off in its course. In the present case, the moraine first met is the oldest. The glacier, shrinking under the influence of an improving temperature, has then begun to deposit the second at some distance further back; and so on.

After a third or fourth of these huge barriers, we come to a large open space, containing some fine pasture and dotted with a few trees, though it cannot be much less than 1800 feet above the sea. While the barrier remained entire, it must have been the bed of a lake; but it presents no lines of ancient beach along its sides, and I therefore conjecture that the process by which the water forced its way out was a rapid one. This, I was told by my guide, is the nightly haunt for feeding of a large herd of deer. During the day, they retire to the high grounds to the right, where they are less liable to be disturbed. The life of the red deer in the Highlands, is like that of a remnant of some barbarous outlawed nation, which, surviving in the midst of civilisation, can only save itself from being extirpated by haunting the recesses of drear forests, extensive morasses, and scarcely accessible mountains. They never wittingly allow any human being to come near them, and it is only by an exercise of the greatest cunning and patience that the sportsman gets within shooting distance. At one moment in my journey of this day, my attention was attracted by my guide to an unwonted object on the brow of the hill far above us. Something like the branches of a burnt forest could be discerned, relieved against the sky. It was a herd of deer. They were evidently keeping an eye upon the two human figures passing through the valley; and had I made a suspicious movement, they would instantly have been off for the far uplands, where the human foot cannot easily follow them. I should vainly try to give an idea of the feeling of wildness and solitude which was raised in me by this spectacle.

We now began to pass under the shades of tremendous wall-like precipices, all black and bare, as at the moment of creation. Our path became steep and toilsome, and it was necessary to rest for a few minutes every quarter of an hour. The granitic constitution of the mountains of the district becomes abundantly visible. The vegetation begins to be scanty. At length, at the elevation of about 3500 feet, we reach a desolate plateau, composed entirely of great slabs of granite, ovated by weathering. A black lake—Loch Attachin—presents itself—surprising to say, full of fish—and having one outlet towards the valley of the Dee, and another towards that of the Spey, a river running to the Moray Firth. In the deep, dark, herbless chasm into which the latter outlet discharges itself, and the other side of which is formed by the lofty Cairngorm, lies the celebrated Loch Avon, 1700 feet above the sea. I am more interested, however, in observing, in the recesses of the mountain near the higher lake, pretty large patches of snow, which rarely melt entirely away—the last remains, as they may be considered, of the glaciers which formed the moraines of Glen Derry. The stony sterility of the whole scene is appalling. One feels disposed to hurry through, and be done with it, lest, by some unforeseen accident, he should be left to its savage inhospitality. I felt this more pressingly, as a cold mist came sweeping past in bitter gusts. After all,

it was necessary to mount a good deal higher before attaining the summit. When this was gained, I found it to be a broad space, composed of the same mouldering, rounded fragments of granite which surround the lake below. Unfortunately, the mist prevented my having any view of the more distant surrounding country. No object varies the scene but a cairn of stones marking the highest point, and the remains of a small rude hut, erected near by for the accommodation of the sappers and miners, when engaged some years ago in the business of the Ordnance survey. Through the stalking masses of mist which passed me, I could get glimpses of the neighbouring peak of Cairngorm, and some others of the brotherhood of mountains planted around, most of which are not sensibly lower than Ben Muicdhuil itself. There was much of terror as well as awe in the feeling of the moment. And it could not well be otherwise. An elevation so great in the north of Scotland is similar to a voyage into the arctic regions. It was with a feeling of relief that, having hurried over a slight refreshment, I commenced my descent from this soul-subduing scene.

In these elevated and dreary regions, there is, of course, a small exhibition of life, either vegetable or animal. I remark, however, that there are few situations in which the black snail is not met with. In general, the plants are Alpine and meagre; but very often, where a spring comes out, there will be found a collection of cresses; one is at a loss to imagine how they got there. Often, after passing into the sterile region, you alight, in some sheltered nook, upon a tuft of blue-bells, like a family of pioneer settlers in the wilderness—the blue-bells of Scotland, as they may well be called, since they typify so truly the hardihood and enterprise of the national character. Very generally, where there is a cross-shaded spring, a small disturbance from your hand or foot will bring out a little hermit-frog, 'loup-loup-louping,' like his brother in the old fairy tale of *The Well of the World's End*. One feels disappointed at his not beginning a conversation, and shewing how you may restore him to his proper form of the finest young prince that ever was seen. When one is entirely alone in such places, some small living object will sometimes arrest attention, and excite sentiment, far beyond the power of similar objects in ordinary scenes. You take to the little wild-flower as a companion; melt at the idea of so many passing through their season-life unsaluted by human eye, yet never the less beautiful on that account; and feel how the many analogies of human life bind up all these things with ourselves, as common creatures and subjects of the great Lord of All. A day in the wilderness now and then, is a Sabbath to the inner feelings of man. I do not think I ever once paused for three minutes of rest in these rocky solitudes, without finding within sight some natural object which prompted the spirit to poetical and religious meditation.

Making a change of route on our return—and for this purpose, by the by, making an extraordinary descent down a corry, where the stones could scarcely lie upon each other—I passed through another glen, which also contains remains of glacial detritus, thus so far confirming my view of the ancient condition of this district in point of temperature. On regaining the gamekeeper's house, I found that the walk had occupied exactly six hours. It was no great feat perhaps; yet, as there are obstacles to its accomplishment, I felt rather pleased with it. A blithesome drive of less than two hours brought us back to Castleton for a late dinner. Amidst the merriment of the inn parlour that evening, some jocular remarks were made on the brief reign which Ben Muicdhuil had had some years ago, as chief of British mountains, while the true height of Ben Nevis was not ascertained; and the consequence was a piece of levity which is here appended

as a finale to an article which, I fear, many will deem to be too much of an opposite description:—

A MOUNTAIN IDYL.

CHARACTERS.

SAUNDERS PRIME, an Aberdeenshire man.
DONALD M'PHERSON, an Inverness-shire man.
AN OFFICER OF THE ORDNANCE SURVEY.

Saunders.

TUNE.—*The Ewie wi' the Crookit Horn.*

Aberdeenshire, lift your browie;
Cock your beaver, Ben Muicdhuil;
There's nae hill sae high as you, I
Queen Victoria's kingdoms a'!
Mining Sappers they ha'e said it,
And the fact we a' maun credit,
Though Ben Nevis wad forbid it;
Faith, he's got an unco fa'!

Donald.

TUNE.—*Johnie Cope.*

My faith, her nainsel doesna care
For a' your brags a single hair;
But for hersel she will declare,

You're a very foolish man this morning.
To think, though Sappers had the will,
They could tak the tap frae aff our hill;
Na, faith! that wad defy their skill;
So I wish you a fery cood morning!

Saunders.

Hoot, Donald, man! ne'er be sae petted;
That's no the way I meant to state it;
They'll neither steer the tap nor feet o't—

The real case I mean to shaw:
Your hill is just as high as ever,
But Sapping Miners now discover,
That Ben Muicdhuil's something over—
It's twenty feet aboon them a'!

Sae, Aberdeenshire, lift your browie, &c.

Donald.

Umph! Sapping Miners—wha are they,
Pretending sic a thing to say?
In troth! they had better no come our way,
Either by night or morning.
Ben Nevis' craigs they are right steep—
Ben Nevis' heughs are unco deep—
An they fa' owre there they'll get a sleep,
And no be waukened in the morning.

Saunders.

Hoot, Donald! ye're in sic a passion,
I vow it's just the Hieland fashion,
Instead o' reasons, g'e a thrashin'!

Have ye nae respect for law?
Black never can be turned to fite, man;
Things will be sae, do as ye like, man;
Ye'll no improve your power to bite, man,
By gnashing at an iron wa'!
Aberdeenshire, lift your browie, &c.

Donald.

What are the Sappers? are they Whigs,
Come back again to play their rigs,
And g'e us thistles for our figs?
A bad exchange this morning!
Or are they skientific men,
That pretend o' mony things to ken?
When between you and me, our auld friend Ben
Knows just as much this morning.

Saunders.

Why, Donald, man, they're just auld sodgers—
On taps o' mountains constant lodgers;
Sic a set o' knowing dodgers,
Sure am I ye never saw.
Every hill they'll tell the height o't;
Every land they ken the right o't;
How they came to get the licht o't,
Ne'er o' us can tell ava!
Aberdeenshire, &c.

Donald.

Proogh, man! they're a set o' feckless chieks;
They may do fery weel for the Lowland hills;
But ours wunt measure in feet or ells—

They're far too high ony morning.

I tell you Ben Nevis will stand out

The king o' hills, past a' dispute,

For I've walked every bit o' t on my ain fut;

So I've no more to say this morning.

Enter an officer of the Ordnance Survey, who bows politely to both gentlemen, and thus addresses them: 'My friends, I believe there is a little mistake between you, which I am able to rectify. In the late government survey of Aberdeenshire, it was found that Ben Muicdhul measured 4280 feet above the sea, being 20 feet more than the height assigned to Ben Nevis by previous unauthorised measurements. But now our men have executed an exact survey of Ben Nevis, and find that it is not less than 4408 feet above the sea; consequently remains 118 feet the superior of Ben Muicdhul, and, till the contrary is shewn, must be held as the king of British mountains!'

Donald.

Hurrah! hurrah! I do declare

You're a fery shivill offishair.

But hark! our hill is a great dale mair

Than what you say this morning.

But come in here and crook your leg;

I'll bring out Long John's muckle keg!

And we'll drown poor Ben Muicdhul's brag

In Ben Nevis' dew this morning!

THE WOLF-HUNTERS.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

On the edge of a wide heath, in the still primitive province of Bretagne or Brittany, stood the antique and quaint-looking dwelling of the Breton family, whose history is the subject of my little romance. It was a wide and dreary heath; but in summer-time, it was gay with the blossoms of the yellow-flowering plant that gave its simple name to our proud line of Plantagenet. The genet or broom was the crest of Edward I., and thus came the haughty-sounding title of Plantagenet, made in English into Plantagenet. Indeed, the province is so full of memorials that attach it in an earlier period to the Great Britain of which it is supposed to have been an off-set or colony, that, however opposed we generally are to the practice of altering or translating geographical names, we always feel inclined to use our own word of Brittany in preference to the French one of Bretagne, in speaking of this ancient kingdom of Armorica, which is still as distinct an adjunct of France, as Wales, or even Ireland, is of the kingdom of England.

Though it is said to have been colonised from our own Britain, partly during the time of the Roman domination, and partly by its refugees from the horrors of the Saxon invasion, the people, being Celts, are in no respect like the English of the present day. The language of Lower Brittany, the most primitive or least civilised part, is as unintelligible to the French, as Welsh or native Irish is to the English; while it is said to bear so strong an affinity to the former and to the dialect of Cornwall—also peopled by ancient Britons—that Breton sailors landing in Wales or Cornwall have been understood by the people. In most respects, however, their character appears to resemble more that of the Scotch Highlanders than either the Welsh or Irish. They are strongly attached to their old ways; and even when religion and loyalty were quite out of fashion in France, they were cherished in Brittany. During the great Revolution, the Bretons fought and suffered for both. Indeed, it would appear that in times of which we have no other memorial than the extraordinary and mysterious monuments

which remain on the earth to puzzle antiquaries, as our own Stonehenge still does, Brittany possessed much the same distinctive character with regard to religion which has in some degree influenced that of its people from generation to generation, something of its spirit seeming to descend from the remote times of the Druidic faith and worship. The people are intensely superstitious, and attach much mysterious influence to the pagan monuments which abound in their country. Christian priests have sought to turn this feeling into a better channel, by consecrating many of these monuments to Christian worship. It is believed by some that Brittany might, in a former age, like our own Mona, now Anglesey, have been in some special manner the seat of the Druidic worship, to which, at stated times, devotees might have repaired from other quarters. The abundance of these singular and enormous stones—the use of which never has been, and, it is reasonable to conclude, never can be satisfactorily made known, but which are believed to have been connected with the religion of the Druids—would seem to warrant such an idea; but while the mystery might seem to be, how human hands could raise such mighty blocks, the simple faith of the unsophisticated Breton settles the antiquarian puzzle, by ascribing such an astonishing work as 'the Temple of Carnac,' composed of 4000 immense stones, standing on a barren plain, where not the least appearance of stone is in their vicinity, to the work of 'the little people,' the dwarfs, who are said to dance round these stones at night, guarding, within their mysterious circle, an immense treasure of gold. Wo, then, to the wanderer who approaches the dancers! He must dance, too, and dance till he dies, if once tempted to begin.

The religious character of the Bretons is preserved even in their fairy superstitions, which very closely resemble those of the Irish. The fairies, for instance, are addicted to child-stealing; therefore children are preserved from their power by a rosary or scapular worn round the neck. These lady-fairies are said once to have been beautiful princesses; but when the Apostles came, and preached Christianity in Brittany, the poor accepted, but the great would not—the pagan princesses chose to be pagans still; and so they became what they are, and remained the enemies of all good things; for the sight of a priest is terrific to them, and the church-bell drives them away.

In the very neighbourhood of such fairy-haunted relics of an unknown age, stood the dwelling I have named: there the father of Pierre and Victor had cultivated his own little farm, and been independent, though far from being rich. Pierre, his elder son, was his assistant; Victor, his younger, kept the goats and sheep on the wide heath, and was assisted in his cares by Virginie, the pretty little orphan girl whom his mother had taken and provided for, simply because there was no one else to do so: the boy was a year younger than the girl, and so she acted quite a maternal and guardian part by him, for one year of seniority gives great authority to the child of a poor family.

How they passed their time, out there on the wide plain, I really am not informed; but at nightfall they took good care to avoid those great mysterious stones which, their father gravely told them, had once been the soldiers of Caesar's army, who came to invade Brittany, and, being pagans, were transfixed into stone as they stood, and must stand there to the end of the world. The theory was an ingenious one, and quite satisfactory to the young Bretons; who, if the great stones were said to have been the forms of the Republican soldiers who slaughtered the priests, and destroyed the churches, shortly before they were born, would have believed the tale just as devoutly.

It was pleasant enough, out there on the wide heath, for the boy and girl, telling the old fairy tales of which their country is the source, or singing the romance-lays

that still have such power over its peasantry.* But pleasant times, especially if times of childhood, must pass; and thus it happened on the wild heath of Brittany. The father fell ill, and change came on; the wide, open hearth, round which the family sat in the winter-evenings, was not then such a cheerful one, for Care—the yellow-visaged enemy of Cheerfulness—came and sat among them, and stopped the song and the tale, and even caused the distaff to twirl more slowly, and the wool-carding to go on more languidly. Finally, Poverty came, and took the place of Care; nearly all was gone; and perhaps one is better when all is gone than when all is going. Virginie went out to service with a farmer at a little distance: this was the change which the boy Victor felt to be the greatest. Pierre, his brother, who was more than four years his senior, did not feel it at all. Virginie was only a child, playing with the boy, and disturbing the gravity of his reflections; for grave and reflective as his people generally are, Pierre was particularly so.

But Virginie went away, and young Victor felt—how? Perhaps much as the sweet poet did when his Lucy left him:

She lived alone, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in the grave, and, oh,
The difference to me!

But the young Breton maid was not in the grave; and though her absence caused the boy to feel 'the difference to him,' he still made that difference as light as possible, by managing to keep up a pretty frequent intercourse with his former comrade.

In the long winter-evenings, he was often sure of a seat by her side when they met at the assembly which regularly takes place at one or other of the peasants' or farmers' houses, where all the families round about meet together, to sit round a common hearth, young and old, men and women, taking it in turn to tell stories, sing songs, or all to listen to the minstrel or wandering bard, generally a blind or lame one, who, as in old times in Wales, Ireland, and even in England, travels from place to place, and from house to house, sure of a glad reception, and of ready listeners to his ballads, which, as is still the case among ourselves, often recount any passing events that may possess some present interest, although it is not likely they will ever pass into the stock of legendary lore still preserved in Brittany, as that which his ancestors long, long ago recounted from castle to castle, or be transmitted to generation after generation, as the songs have been to which noble knights and stately ladies listened to with the same devout attention and ready faith as the unchanged peasantry of Brittany do at the present day.

No winter snow or summer heat detained young Victor from a meeting with the young maid of the farm; but it was only at a 'pardon' that Pierre, his elder brother, chanced to meet her after a long separation. The name is so peculiar, I must explain what it means.

The pardon answers to what in old or Roman Catholic times the English wake did: now, the wake has lost a part at least of its original character, and come to be a mere periodical merry-making, a scene too generally of drunkenness and vice. In Wales, the pardon is, I believe, now to be traced in the bardic meeting; but in Ireland, where the same religion is maintained, it has its counterpart in the 'patron.'

It is, in fact, a parochial and religious festival, held on the saint's day who is the patron of the village church. In Brittany, the pardon retains that primitive character

which, in Protestant or semi-Protestant lands, has been lost or modified. It begins with religion, and ends with festivity, and presents a curious mixture of both throughout the three days of its duration.

The eve is announced by the ringing of the church-bells, attachment and even veneration for which form another old-fashioned peculiarity of Breton character. The altars of the churches are newly arrayed, and the image of the patron saint is adorned. The church is cleaned, and in it are deposited the offerings of the peasants, consisting of the produce of their land or the work of their industry—corn, flax, wool, articles made of plaited straw, such as large chairs or beehives—anything, in short, that can be of use, if not to the saint to whom it is nominally offered, at least to the priest of the parish, whom they respect and esteem almost as much. Perhaps some persons would find, without much difficulty, the prototype of such customs in the paganism which Christianity supplanted in this primitive district; but in England, as well as in Brittany, it was the practice to dance in the church itself on these festive occasions. The clergy there, as they did here, found some difficulty in abolishing it.

Now, the people having gone to confession, and obtained the absolution or pardon, testify their gladness by all sorts of rejoicing. Some sacred well or fountain, famous in old song and tale, is almost sure to be in the neighbourhood; and thither the musicians repair, and around it the dance is formed. The fairies haunt these wells still, and comb their yellow hair beside them, with golden combs, just as they did hundreds of years ago; and Victor thought young Virginie could dance around them as well as any fay of the land.

On the occasion of what is termed a grand or great pardon, the people come from considerable distances to the special locality. Sometimes they arrive on the eve, sometimes at dawn of day: when they come in a band, they often carry banners, and their own pastor walks at their head. When they first come within sound of the church-bells, they uncover their heads, kneel, and say a prayer. The priests of the district come to meet their brethren; they enter the church; and after the offices are ended, they all, priests and people, make a procession in the neighbourhood, joined by all of the highest rank who reside in it, if, in its progress, any religious ceremonial takes place.

Tents are pitched for the habitation of the strangers, and the whole of the first day is dedicated to religion. The bards sing hymns in the church-yards; the priests are in the confessionals; the churches are filled by people, kneeling there in penitence or prayer. All through the day, and on through the night, religion holds her sway: the native bards who flock to these pardons now sing pious hymns, or recount saintly legends. But, with the dawn of day, religion withdraws to a little distance, though it still continues, strangely enough, to be blended at intervals with all that follows. Now begin races, games, dancing, singing, and sometimes those religious dramas, in the style of the old Mysteries, which, however, on these occasions, take for the subject the wonderful miracles which the saints of Brittany are celebrated for.

It was in such a scene and at such a time that Pierre, young Victor's elder brother, met with Virginie, the maid from the farm. A pardon—it is not profane to say so—is not an unlikely place to begin a love-affair; and so Master Pierre found it. He had not seen Virginie for a long time: he found the little girl grown into a nice young woman, tall, and straight, and bright-looking. He had come to the pardon, seeking its religious benefits more than its festive pleasures; for the cast of seriousness which distinguishes a Breton as well as an Irish nature, and gives a tinge of sadness to their national poetry and legends, predominated strongly in his, and seemed to throw a shadow around

* So addicted are the Bretons still to this minstrel lore, that, in the time of the cholera, the bards or improvisators, who still exist among them, were employed to sing or recite the remedies which the doctors recommended.

him, which might be prognostic of a mournful destiny. Nevertheless, Pierre and Virginie danced round the well, and were so pleasant together, that before the third day was nearly over, he had made her promise to come over to the quaint old house on the edge of the moor, to see his father and mother. And Virginie was so happy to have made the grave, pensive, thoughtful Pierre look so bright and cheerful, that she promised readily, and thought she could soon make him as lively and pleasant as Young Victor. She was accustomed to Victor—'the good boy'—and thought nothing at all of his devotion to her, for he was a whole year younger than she was; but the power she possessed in dispelling the gravity of his brother, was something quite new and flattering to her; so for sundry fête-days after the pardon, she regularly went in the afternoons over the wide moor, to spend them at her former home. At first she had done so, and then Victor used to meet and accompany her there; and in the evening he used to convey her back, taking good care not to pass near the dolmen,* lest 'the little folk' should get them into their fatal circle. They had been pleasant walks, too, but somehow it was Pierre, not Victor, who now attended the farm-maiden on her evening road: they always left 'the boy' either, as the Irish would say, 'crooning over the fire,' or stretched on the stone-seat outside the house. What was the matter with him? That was precisely what neither of them thought of asking. Victor was 'only a boy,' and his freaks were not to be accounted for. So, on one of those festival afternoons when Virginie, in her holiday trim, was coming over the moor, she was met by Pierre, and the rest of the way took longer time in making. That heath was not unlike the 'broomy knowe' of the land of Burns, and in summer-tide its yellow blossoms might have tempted the active and hard-working Virginie to linger among them, as she had done in the blithesome days of childhood.

However that was, the pair entered together the quaint old dwelling at the side of the moor, where, together with the father and mother, sat young Victor, looking as if he did not know what to do with himself. Virginie kissed the old couple on each cheek; and, somehow avoiding even a glance at the boy, said only: 'Good-day, Victor,' and ran out of the door, saying, the sun was charming, and she wanted to look at it, or something to that effect.

Pierre stayed within it, and seemed brighter than usual. Victor looked beyond it, and was rising to follow the visitor, when his brother's words stopped him short. He looked at his father and mother with a smile, and then he asked their consent to marry Virginie.

The old couple were surprised—but it was the destiny of all people to be married. Pierre did not know what was before him: they looked grave, shook their heads, finally shed tears, embraced him, and gave a hearty consent. Virginie was a good girl; the mother had brought her up herself, and could answer for her. Yes, Pierre might thank her if a better wife was not to be found in the whole of Brittany.

But why was Victor silent? Stupid boy! he could not say a word: a convulsion seemed to have seized him, and when it passed, he looked as much like the stiff, upright menhir as anything else.† Without noticing him, Pierre went out, and led in the bride-elect, smiling, blushing a little, and really feeling happy because she had made 'that sombre Pierre so happy.'

But where was Victor? The boy did not come to welcome the new sister. Poor Victor! where was he?

He was out on the wide moor—out in the happy haunts of his boyhood, where the evening breeze tossed the broom-flowers about, and the mysterious stones that had been Roman soldiers, rose up in the twilight; and the tormenting elves who danced around them, and delighted in putting human affairs astray, alone could tell in what precise train the youth found his to be.

But one thing is certain, that there—on the heath where the children had played, and the boy had learned to love—there, before the menhir which both held in veneration—there did young Victor, with a full and throbbing heart, vow to promote the happiness of his dear Virginie, though that was to be effected by her marriage with his brother.

Yet Virginie had never known of his love. They had grown together like two young trees in their native forests, as calmly, as dispassionately. She was older than he was: there was the ground of her mistake. A girl who is older than a youth who is even expressly devoted to her, naturally looks down upon him, and wishes to have an admirer of a higher class. But there is something in the very aspirations to manhood—which aspirations beat, I suppose, as strongly beneath a goatskin pelisse as beneath an English round jacket—that lead a boy to look with reverence and love to some fair star above him. So did our great poet Byron, and so did our young Breton, Victor. A boy's first love is almost always his senior. Such love, it is true, but seldom lasts: in full-grown manhood, and, still more, when verging to manhood's more than maturity, the same being loves to protect, to cherish, to guide, and consequently loves what is most beneath him; but the object of a boy's first love is almost always his superior, in years as in all else.

First love! O it is a powerful and all-transforming spell, capable of being used for the best or the worst of influences! Yet, in manhood, it is looked back to as a mere nonsense, or, at best, regarded with a sort of half-sigh, half-smile remembrance. Ah! if all young girls knew their power at such an epoch—knew how much of future destiny lies in their control—knew how many a heart, made better or worse, they might send out into the world, to meet and brave the struggles or the woes of manhood. They know it not; know it as little as Virginie did, who might have made an equal plaything of the warm heart of young Victor, had its throbbing pulses been bared to her view. But she was saved from that sin, for she knew it not.

It was mid-winter. Across a wide and dreary moor, two travellers journeyed over the snow that already had covered all but the tall mystic stone which, surmounted by a cross, testified at once to the existence of a past and a present faith.

The deep snow that already lay under foot, was constantly increased by the falling flakes which hovered whitely in the darkness, for it was yet far from day-break. No sound, save that of the travellers' footsteps, broke the silence that added to the desolate aspect of the scene; and the figures that traversed it were singularly appropriate to its aspect.

They were Bretons; one younger than the other, but both habited alike in long coats of brown goatskin, with the hair outside, over which the light-brown hair of the elder, and coal-black hair of the younger, flowed down almost to their shoulders from beneath their broad-brimmed hats—mixing, in the case of the elder, with the beard that, young as he was, hung gemmed with snow some inches below his chin. He was pretty heavily armed; carrying a long pike, while to his leathern girdle was attached the *serpe de bûcheron*, or wood-cutter's hook—a heavy and deadly instrument, bent at one end, and capable of being exercised with effect on matter more sensitive than the forest wood.

Yet the face of the young man, in contrast to his

* The Breton dolmen is the English stone-table, called in Ireland cromlech, being rude blocks of upright stones, supporting a table or slab of the same.

† The menhir is the Breton name for the upright stones called Druidic, which are now, in Brittany, often surmounted by a cross.

accoutrements, was more expressive of sadness, anxiety, and even tenderness, than of any daring disposition or desperate tendencies. His companion was a youth just verging on manhood; tall, and strongly made for his years, and with an eye that could at times lighten up with a fire, the source of which lay deep within his heart. His countenance was composed; and, closely enveloped in his goatskin pelisse, he appeared to be unarmed, and merely an attendant on the other.

They had crossed the moor; a distant twinkling light appeared through the misty air: it came from a house that stood near to the edge of a wood or forest, the darker outline of which was faintly discernible in the dull twilight of morning.

'There is the rendezvous,' said the elder. 'Victor, you must leave me now. The road is difficult through this snow, and it is not necessary to fatigue yourself, especially as you must work harder on the farm to-day, in order to supply my place. Adieu! Victor; adieu petit.'

Victor said nothing, but walked on a little faster.

'Go, my brother,' said Pierre, stopping and laying his hand kindly on his younger brother's shoulder; 'return to our home, and desire poor Virginie to hasten to the menhir, and say an ave for every wolf's head she wishes me to bring back.'

'No, Pierre; I will not return, my brother,' said Victor with a grave and resolute air.

'No! How far wilt thou go, then? Even to the fight, perhaps?'

'Assuredly. Such is my intention.'

'Poor boy!'

'Yes, boy, if thou wilt! But perhaps this may serve thee, Pierre: see, I have my serpe also, and I sharpened it well last night;' and drawing aside the goatskin garment, he shewed the weapon concealed beneath it.

Pierre looked at it gravely.

'And is it thy ambition to be a wolf-hunter that has prompted thee to this?' he asked in a tone in which wonder and pity might seem to blend.

'Be that as it may,' said young Victor, in a tone that might appear either careless or haughty.

'Thou shalt come no further!' cried the elder: 'consider only, and renounce thy rash design. Wouldst thou have me fail in my object, and lose the benefit of the chase to-day? How can I expect to conquer wolves, if I must occupy myself in the care of thee? Wouldst thou have me lose my only hope of procuring a substitute for the army of Africa, and see me depart and leave Virginie to die of grief at home? Think of what that dear girl would say, if she knew how you embarrass me.'

'It is not at all necessary for you to occupy yourself in the care of defending me, my brother,' Victor answered; 'and as for Virginie, she need not be tormented by hearing anything about it.'

'Well, then, go—return, my brave boy: I shall be late at the rendezvous,' said the elder brother.

'Pierre,' said the other with far more calmness and resolution, 'listen to my words. You love our Virginie; you would be her husband—that is natural. But the conscription comes; you draw a bad number. Well; you must join the army of Africa. It costs much to get a substitute; I am not yet of the full age. Well, the wolves have been troublesome, and our farmers have lost some horses; our mayor offers thirty francs for each wolf's head. Well, you would rather fight with the wolves than with the infidels—that also is natural. You want to get money enough to buy a substitute—that is, to get so many wolves' heads at thirty francs a head; and the fight is to be to-day. Well, listen still: do you hope to despatch more than two wolves to-day? Hope it not: you know what they are at this season, when the snow is on the ground. Now, for two heads, our mayor will pay you sixty francs—a pretty sum, truly, to touch for so small a matter; but still you will

want much more to buy a substitute for military glory. Well, it appears to me that with the help of this excellent serpe, I might manage to get one head—there is thirty francs more, to be paid to any one who will join the great army of France.'

'And if the wolf should kill you, instead of your killing the wolf?' said Pierre.

'True; that remains to be thought of,' Victor answered, as if reflecting on the question. 'Well, my brother, in that case I need not go to a wolf-fight in order to pay a substitute when the next conscription comes.'

'Victor,' said his brother earnestly, 'you know that ever since I have been betrothed to Virginie, you have been our mother's hope and dependence: you have come here without her knowledge; should danger befall you, the blame will rest on me: I shall lose her consent, and thus my marriage with Virginie will be impossible.'

'That would be deplorable,' the other as earnestly replied. 'Adieu, then, my brother; take care of yourself: I will return home. May the good saints befriend thee!' And Victor turned and walked some steps back. Ere he had gone far, he stopped, and looking towards his brother, who still stood still, he called aloud, as if by hasty impulse: 'Pierre, I too love Virginie! I have loved her ever since I was born: I love her more than the air I breathe, than the life I live. In three months I shall join the army of Africa, not as a conscript, but as a free man.' And having made the double declaration, young Victor continued to retrace his way over the snowy moor.

THINGS AS THEY ARE IN AMERICA.

PHILADELPHIA.

TERMINATING my brief visit to Washington, I made my way northwards by railway through Baltimore to Philadelphia, the journey occupying little more than six hours. Writing now after an interval of several months, I throw my mind back to the very delightful residence of a few days which it was my fortune to enjoy in the city of Brotherly Love. My quarters were at the Girard House, a hotel in Chestnut Street of the first class; but so much of my time was engaged in making calls, seeing sights, and picking up scraps of information, that my stay was a perpetual change of scene and circumstances.

When William Penn fixed on the spacious peninsula between the Delaware on the east, and the Schuylkill on the west, for the site of a large city, he may be said to have selected one of the most beautiful and convenient spots on the whole coast of America. Approachable from the sea by the Delaware, the land, with a gentle yet sufficient rise from the water, was originally a fertile plain, dotted over with trees, and inhabited only by a few Indians. Such was the sylvan scene on which the first English settlers made their appearance in 1681, and began the reclamation of the wilderness. What do we now see after a period of a hundred and seventy-three years?—A city, the second in point of size in the United States—second, however, to none in beauty, regularity, and all the blessings attending on good order and intelligence. We are called on so frequently to note the rapid progress of American cities, that the subject ceases to excite surprise. There is something, however, more than usually wonderful in the growth of Philadelphia. At about the time of the Revolution, when the English abandoned it, the number of inhabitants, army

included, was only 21,000; so that when Franklin was at the zenith of his glory as a philosopher and statesman, the city of his adoption was in reality but a comparatively small place. Since that not distant era, the population has mounted to nearly, if not beyond, 500,000; and to all appearance it is destined to equal that of New York. That Philadelphia may, indeed, be soon the first of American cities, would not be astonishing; for it possesses the advantage of being now, since railway communication was opened, on the speediest route from the Atlantic to the Ohio and Mississippi, and of having ample room to expand in its dimensions, which New York unfortunately has not.

Every one has heard of the plainness of Philadelphia. According to ordinary notions, it is a plain brick town, with straight lines of street crossing each other at right angles, and altogether as dull and monotonous as its Quaker founders could have desired. In this, as in many things, the fancy dresses up a picture which is dispelled by actual observation. So far from being a dull or dismal town, Philadelphia is found to be a remarkably animated city, with streets crowded with as fashionable a set of people as you could wish to see, and displaying a greater number of private carriages than are paraded in any other part of America. It may be allowed that the scheme of long and straight rows of brick buildings, with scarcely any variation in shape, is not very tasteful; but a severe regularity in this respect is better than no plan at all, with the consequent confusion of streets, lanes, and mysterious back-courts with which such cities as London are afflicted. As a relief to the monotony of Philadelphia, the houses are constructed of a species of brick so smooth and fine, and so neatly laid, that all other brick-built cities sink in comparison. Then, let it be understood, that the basement story of many of the houses, the architraves, and nearly all the flights of steps to the doors, are of pure white marble. Next, take into account the punctiliously clean windows of plate-glass—the broad granite pavements—the well-swept, I might almost say washed, streets—the rows of leafy trees for shadowing the foot-passengers—the air of neatness generally prevailing—and you have a tolerable idea of the capital of Pennsylvania.

Going into particulars, many other things strike the stranger. Latterly, the taste of the inhabitants has overleaped the primitive architectural design, and begun to substitute magnificent buildings of marble and red sandstone for those of brick. The ordinary height is also here and there exceeded; and now a pleasing variety takes the place of the ancient and much-complained of uniformity. Similar changes are observable in the naming of streets; although, all things considered, the old plan is perhaps the best. It consisted in distinguishing all the streets running one way according to numbers, as First, Second, Third Street, and so on; and naming all those which proceeded in a cross direction, after trees, as Chestnut, Mulberry, Spruce Street, &c. The old names, as far as they went, are happily preserved. Running right across the town, from the Delaware to the Schuylkill, is Chestnut Street, the main or fashionable thoroughfare; and near its centre, comprehending a space from First to Fourth Street, is the chief seat of business operations. Suddenly put down hereabouts, the English stranger would be surprised at the traffic which seems to prevail, the thronging of well-dressed people, and the unexpected splendour of the shops—large stores shewing a long vista of elegant counters, shelving, and glass-cases, such as may be seen in the better parts of London and Paris, and stocked with the most costly articles of luxury. Proceeding eastwards along Chestnut Street, we finally arrive at the Delaware, which is faced by a long quay-like street, with a frontage of wooden wharfs jutting into the water; and here, as far as the eye can carry, nothing is seen but the masts and cordage of vessels,

the puffing of steamers arriving and departing, and the struggling of draymen, porters, and sailors, engaged in the business of loading and unloading articles of commerce. At the upper extremity of the quay, the shipment of coal, brought down by railway from the great Pennsylvanian coal-fields, seems to be conducted on so large a scale, that a Northumbrian might be deceived into the idea that he was on the banks of the Tyne.

Renewed and improved in various ways, Philadelphia shews few architectural relics of its early history. We see nothing of any edifice in which Franklin resided; and neither, until the time of my visit, had any public monument been erected to his memory, which, however, is preserved in connection with various institutions. The most remarkable building, dating from the pre-revolutionary period, is the old State-house, situated a short way back from the line of thoroughfare in Chestnut Street, so as to form a kind of square. It is a respectable, old-fashioned looking brick structure, consisting of a ground and upper story, with a spire partly of wood rising from the centre, and a wing added to each end. This edifice, which was erected so early as 1734, afforded accommodation for the congressional assemblies of the Revolution; and it was here, in the large apartment on the left-hand side of the doorway, that the famed Declaration of Independence was signed. At present, the apartment, which is unfurnished, seems to be reserved as a sacred show-place for strangers. It contains a few relics of antiquarian interest; one of these being the bell which, at about two o'clock in the afternoon of the 4th of July 1776, sounded a peal from the spire above, to announce that the Declaration had been subscribed. Having been subsequently fractured, it is now laid aside here as an object of curiosity. The other apartments of the old State-house are occupied chiefly as courts of justice; for Philadelphia, although the principal city of Pennsylvania, is not honoured by being made the place of meeting of the state legislature. That dignity, according to the usual American plan of huddling away the business of legislation into retired nooks, has, since 1812, belonged to the small town of Harrisburg, a hundred miles distant, on the Susquehanna river.

Behind the old State-house is an enclosed space with rows of trees; no doubt an agreeable summer-lounge to the Hancocks, Washingtons, and Franklins of revolutionary memory. Adjacent to the further extremity of the enclosure, is one of the few squares in the city, forming a lawn, with walks and seats, and prettily ornamented with trees. On visiting this spot, which is open to the public, I was amused by observing the tameness of a number of gray squirrels, which at call came down from their nests in the trees, and were fed by the children who were playing about the grass. It was pleasing to learn that these little animals did not suffer any injury from the youthful visitors of the square, and that care was taken of them by the public. How much good, I thought, might be done, by thus accustoming children to look kindly on the creatures which God has committed to our general regard and bounty!

Few cities are so well provided with water as Philadelphia. Beyond the environs on the west, the Schuylkill, which is a river about the size of the Thames, is dammed up and thrown back into a capacious pool, whence the water is led away and pumped by powerful wheels into a reservoir, nearly 100 feet high. By these means, 1,500,000 gallons of water are raised every twenty-four hours, and supplied by mains to the city in such profusion, that every family has an ample command of this prime necessary of life. The water-works on the Schuylkill form a favourite resort for the inhabitants of the city. The scene at the spot where the river falls over the barrier forming the dam, is very charming. Immediately beneath, a handsome suspension-bridge

has lately been erected, by which access is readily obtained to the opposite banks.

In the neighbourhood of these hydraulic-works, is situated the celebrated Eastern Penitentiary of Pennsylvania, which, originating in the efforts of a few humane individuals interested in the subject of penal discipline, has formed a model for the system of prisons now authorised in Great Britain. Having visited pretty nearly all the large prisons in Germany, France, and England, I felt a degree of interest in comparing their arrangements with those in operation in this American institution. The plan adopted is that of the separate system, as it is called, but with considerable modifications. About eleven acres of ground are surrounded by a wall thirty feet high, with battlemented turrets; and in the middle of the enclosure is the prison, designed on the principle of corridors radiating from a central point. The cells open from, and are ranged along, the corridors, in the usual manner, each containing a convict, who, from entry to dismissal, lives and works in his cell, and is allowed no communication with other prisoners. In England, it is customary to permit the prisoners to have outdoor exercise at certain hours, in courtyards. Here, a more humane and reasonable practice is followed. Each cell is provided with a small courtyard, into which the unhappy inmate may, during the day, step at pleasure. The entrance into this little airing-ground is at the end of the cell opposite the door, and according to taste, is laid out partly as a parterre of flowers, in the cultivation of which the prisoner may relieve the wretchedness of his confinement. In several instances, on entering the cells, I found the inmates in their courtyards reading in the sunshine, which stole over the top of the high bounding-walls; and I thought, that this open communing with nature must have in it something soothing and improving to the feelings. Hand-weaving at small looms, and shoemaking, seemed the principal crafts pursued by the prisoners. In one of the cells, occupied by a shoemaker, there was a pair of pigeons, which sat meekly on the edge of a pail by the man's side; and on questioning him respecting these animals, he said he prized them as companions. 'They do me good,' he said, 'when I look at them: their cooing cheers me when I am alone.' I was glad that the prison authorities allowed the unfortunate man this simple pleasure. But it seems to be one of the aims of the directors of the institution, to neglect no means of operating on the moral sentiments of the prisoners. Though styled the separate system, the discipline admits of the freest intercourse with respectable visitors. The best people in Philadelphia call upon, and hold converse with, the convicts, who doubtless receive no small benefit through such agencies.

The last cell I visited was double the size of the others, and occupied by a man who was busily engaged at a bench, making chairs with carpentry tools. On our entry, he did not look up, but continued at his employment. He was a stout-made young man, probably not more than thirty years of age, with a good-humoured expression of countenance, and was dressed in a linen blouse, confined round the waist. A more unlikely person for a criminal could hardly be imagined. After a few introductory observations, I inquired the nature of the offence for which he was committed. His answer was the single and startling word—'Murder!'

'Whom did you kill?' I asked. His reply was affecting.

'I killed my wife; but it was in self-defence. She was a bad woman; she had been drinking with some men in my own house, and when I returned home after a short absence, she ran at me with an axe. I saved myself by holding out my razor, which happened to be in my pocket at the time; it unfortunately struck upon her neck, and she bled to death. I was tried, and condemned to twelve years' imprisonment.' Such was

the man's story; and if true in all particulars, it seems to infer scant justice in the tribunals. On looking about, I observed a child's chest of drawers, which the prisoner said he had made for his daughter, who came at times to see him, and whose visits afforded him the only gleam of happiness in his lot. I could not but feel deeply interested in this individual; and I ventured to throw out the hope, that by good conduct he might by and by obtain a remission of his sentence. On the whole, after making a survey of the prison, and hearing explanations respecting its arrangements, I was more favourably impressed with the genial system pursued, than with the comparatively arid discipline which prevails in our penitentiaries. Besides this general receptacle for criminals, there are two houses of refuge for juvenile vagrants and offenders in Philadelphia—one for white and another for coloured inmates; for even in crime and suffering, colour asserts a distinction here as elsewhere in the States.

The humane system of prison-discipline introduced into Philadelphia, seems to be appropriate in a city founded by a body of religionists whose aim has always been that of practical benevolence. Begun by Friends, this sect has left its impress on the public institutions, and also the usages of the inhabitants; but has long since dwindled down to be one of the least noticeable religious bodies in the city, and in the present day, the number of persons dressed as Quakers in the streets is in no way conspicuous.

The public buildings of Philadelphia—such as banks, hospitals, churches, theatres, and other establishments, including a Merchants' Exchange—are of a more than usually elegant style of architecture; and it seemed as if in no city in the Union was greater progress making than in this department of the arts. One of the more stately of these public edifices is the Girard Bank, in Third Street, once occupied by Stephen Girard, and where that remarkable person amassed the large fortune which, at his death, was bequeathed to the city for the support of an institution for orphans, and other purposes. The Girard College, founded by this appropriation, and now occupied as an educational hospital for children, is situated at a short distance from the town on a high ground, towards the Schuylkill, and is by far the finest building, in point of size, material, and purely Grecian character, in the United States. On the evening after my arrival, a gentleman kindly undertook to conduct me to this, the grandest architectural product of America. Placed as it is within a spacious pleasure-ground, I was struck with its magnificent proportions and general aspect. It is in form a parallelogram, composed entirely of white marble, with a basement of steps all round. With eight Corinthian pillars at each end, and eleven on each side, supporting a pediment and roof, it presents an exact model of the higher class Greek temples. The pillars are 6 feet in diameter, and 55 feet high, exclusive of base and capital. As it was open to inspection, I ascended by an inner stair to the roof, whence a magnificent view was obtained over the city and country to the west. The roof itself is a curiosity. It is composed of slabs of marble, resembling tiles, and the weight of these alone is about 1000 tons. Consisting chiefly of class-rooms, the edifice does not lodge the pupils, who, with the teachers and other officers, reside in two separate or out buildings. The whole of this superb monument cost nearly 2,000,000 of dollars. I call it monument; for, like Heriot's and Donaldson's Hospitals at Edinburgh, it is, in reality, a thing devised by the founder to keep his name from sinking into oblivion. The rearing of children in monastic establishments of this class, is an error of the past, which one does not expect to find perpetuated in so new a country as America; and the sight of Girard College, with all its architectural elegance, is on this account felt to be more painful than otherwise.

As regards general education, Pennsylvania has followed the example set by the New England states; and now the stranger will be gratified in witnessing a completely ramified system, adapted to the wants of the community, free from sectarian bias, and conducted entirely at the public cost, as a matter of municipal policy. Nearly an entire day was devoted by me to visiting schools and academies established on this liberal basis; and, like all who have made similar inquiries, I rejoiced to see such admirable means adopted to insure the intelligence of future generations. As elsewhere, I observed that in these public schools the children of different classes of people attended without reserve—the son of a carter, for example, being seen beside the son of a judge—a state of things less imputable to any republican notion, than to the fact, that the education given could not be excelled, if it could be at all approached, in any private establishment. Perhaps, also, something is due to another fact; which is, that the children of a humbler class of persons are usually as well dressed as those of a superior station; for in general circumstances, American operatives, with their high sense of self-respect, dress themselves and their families in a manner which admits of no challenge from the more opulent classes. The entire number of publicly supported schools, ranging from the primary to the higher establishments, is about 300, with upwards of 800 teachers, of whom the majority are young women specially educated for the purpose in a normal school. Besides these institutions, there are many denominational academies; and latterly, a School of Design has been commenced for the purpose of improving the tastes of young persons connected with manufacturing establishments.

Like Boston and New York, Philadelphia abounds in public libraries, museums, and scientific and artistic institutions. I was taken from library to library through a long and bewildering series, each addressed to a different class of readers—apprentices, merchants, and men of scientific and literary acquirements. In this excursion, I visited the rooms of the American Philosophical Society—the oldest institution of the kind in the United States, having been begun by Dr Franklin, whose venerable portrait hangs in one of the apartments. The custodian of the institution, among other curiosities, shewed a number of letters of Franklin; and what was more historically interesting, the original draught of the Declaration of Independence by Jefferson, containing the fiery passage in reference to negro slavery, which was discreetly struck out on the final revision of the document.

Once the political metropolis of the States, nothing of that character now pertains to Philadelphia but the national Mint, which, for some special reasons, has not been removed to Washington. After a sight of the Royal Mint in London, one would not expect to find any novelty here; but the establishment is exceedingly worthy of being visited, if only to see the extent of the coining process, and the beauty of the mechanism which is employed. Accommodated in a large marble building, with a portico and pillars in front, the Mint is conducted with a singular accuracy of arrangement under proper officers, and according to the latest improvements in the arts. Many of the lighter operations, including the weighing and filing of the gold pieces, and the assorting of quantities of coin, are performed by young women. While being politely conducted through the several departments by the principal of the establishment, I inquired what means were adopted for securing the integrity of the persons employed; and was told in reply, that none was attempted beyond the ordinary checks as to weight. 'Our true check, however,' said the intelligent functionary, 'is the sentiment of self-respect. All are put on their honour, and the smallest act of dishonesty in one would be felt as a disgrace to the whole. We are repaid for our confidence—nothing

is lost; thefts are unknown.' Can they be a bad people of whom such a character is given? I think not.

Since the discovery of gold in California, the coinage has been immense. Travellers, a few years ago, spoke of the abundance and wretchedness of the paper-money circulating everywhere through the States. You still see dollar-notes, purporting to be issued by state and city banks; but, to all appearance, the circulating medium is to a very large extent, if not chiefly, in gold coins. At the time of my visit, the principal deficiency was in silver, for small-change; though new quarter dollars of that metal, resembling an English shilling, were coming into use, and are now perhaps plentiful. The most common coins were the gold dollar—a most beautiful small piece—the two-and-a-half dollar, and the five-dollar piece. The eagle—a ten-dollar gold coin—was seldom visible, and more seldom still, the double eagle. Latterly, it has been proposed to coin fifty-dollar gold pieces; and some of an octagonal form of that amount have been actually executed at California, and are seen in the windows of the money-changers in New York. On looking over the collection of native and foreign coins in the Mint at Philadelphia, it is observable that the Americans come quite up to the English in some details of mechanical execution, but are still distanced in artistic design. The devices on the various American pieces, gold and silver, are not elegant, neither is the die-sinking so perfect as it might be; and to an improvement in both these points, the United States' government, for the sake of its own credit, could not do better than direct attention. It appears that for several years the coinage in the Mint at Philadelphia has been upwards of 50,000,000 of dollars per annum. Taken in connection with the product of the English and French Mints, it is stated on authority, that the coined money ushered into existence in the year 1853, attained the value of £38,725,831—a quantity of hard cash added to the ordinary currency which gives an impressive idea of the industrial transactions of modern times.

After all that a stranger can say of the more remarkable edifices and institutions in a city—after describing the aspect of the streets and of the people who crowd them—he necessarily leaves off with the conviction, that he has failed to impart a full and correct idea of what came under his notice. How, for example, am I able to communicate a just notion of the intelligence, the refinement, the enterprise of the Philadelphians—their agreeable and hospitable society, their pleasant evening-parties, their love of literature, their happy blending of the industrial habits of the north with the social usages of the south? All this must be left to conjecture, as well as the Oriental luxury of their dwellings, and the delicate beauty of their ladies. I only indulge in the hope that these fair and fascinating beings will not accuse me of want of gallantry in hinting to them, in the gentlest possible manner, that they have one fault—at least I think they have—one, however, common to all their countrywomen, and that is, staying too much in the house, in an atmosphere not quite, but nearly, as hot as that of an oven. O these terribly suffocating apartments, with the streams of warm air rushing out of gratings from some unimaginable hot cavern beneath—siroccos of the desert led, as a matter of fancy, into drawing-rooms—languor-promoting and cheek-blanching gales—enemies to health and longevity! How the ordinary duties of life are carried on in these hot-houses, I cannot understand. Sometimes I was inclined to think that there must be a great chilliness in American constitutions—that they must feel cold much more readily than we do in England, where, even in the coldest weather, houses are rarely heated beyond 65 degrees, and that by open fires promotive of ventilation. From whatever reason, the Americans heat their

dwelling to a degree of which we in the old country have not the faintest conception. That such a practice is the main cause of a want of rosy colour in the complexion, and that appearance of premature old age in many persons of both sexes, is past a doubt; though I am not aware that the subject has met with attention from physiologists. 'What with the thin dry air out of doors, and hot stoves within, the Americans,' said a facetious friend, 'get themselves regularly baked—shrivelled up before their time. No wonder they are everlastingly drinking cold water: if they did not keep moistening themselves, they would dry up to mummies.' This joke was rather hard, but not altogether undeserved.

Philadelphia is somehow associated, *par excellence*, in the minds of the English with the idea of America. When we think of the history of that great country, or of its statesmen, or patriots, up comes the notion of Philadelphia in a very remarkable way. The story of Franklin's early struggles, imprinted on the mind of every boy, has perhaps something to do with this psychological spectrum. We all recollect his efforts to get up a printing-office—the deceptive promises of the English governor to lend him money to import a small stock of types—his newspaper, started originally by Keimar in 1723, and the second in the province—his experiments in drawing lightning from the clouds—and many other interesting circumstances in his career. It is now about a hundred and twenty years since Franklin commenced as a bookseller and printer in Philadelphia, and gave, as it may be said, a literary reputation to the place. From small beginnings, the trade in the production of books has increased so largely, that now the city in this respect is a formidable rival to Boston and New York. Besides a large number of magazines, and journals of science and art, published periodically, there were, at the time of my visit, as many as twelve or thirteen daily, and upwards of forty weekly, newspapers—several of them religious, for Sunday-reading. From several publishing-houses, there are issued vast quantities of books in miscellaneous literature; and here, among other curiosities which interested me professionally, I alighted upon the large concern of Messrs Lippincott, Grambo, and Company, which, independently of a trade in publishing, carries on the peculiar business of book-merchants. A spacious building, several stories in height, is stored, floor above floor, with books gathered from all the publishers in the Union, as well as from England, and ready for selection and purchase by retail-booksellers coming from every part of the States. Any person, for example, wishing to open a book-store in California, or some other distant quarter, may here, in a walk from bin to bin, acquire such a varied stock as suits his purse or his inclination. Say that he is going to open for a season at Saratoga, the White Sulphur Springs of Virginia, or any other fashionable watering-place, there he has his choice of handy little volumes, flashily gilt, in the light line. Or, say that he wishes to go into the school, or heavy trade, still he finds a mine of material ready to his fingers. In an hour, he might load a wagon with all the varied literary wares he can possibly require; just as a country draper, dropping into one of the streets about Cheapside, is able to lay in his miscellaneous stock of haberdashery for the season. I was told by one of the principals of the firm, that it had dealings in every seat of population of any importance from New Orleans to Toronto, and from the Atlantic to beyond St Louis. Think of commercial travellers being despatched on a journey of 2000 miles—as far as from London to Cairo or Jerusalem!

Such concerns as this are types of the manufacturing and trading establishments of Philadelphia, which, in different departments, is making extraordinary endeavours to reach the position taken from it half a

century ago by New York. A person accustomed to think of Birmingham as the only great seat of manufactures in metal, would be surprised to see the large establishments in Philadelphia for the production of that single article, the locomotive, of which several hundreds are exported annually to England. In a factory of another kind, I found 800 persons employed in making gas-lustres and chandeliers; and in a third, were seen 150 operatives engaged in the manufacture of gold chains and other varieties of jewellery. In the fabrication of military and ladies' dress-trimmings, some hundreds of hands are also employed; and one house pointed out to me, was said to make 1000 umbrellas and parasols in a day. The manufactures of the place are stated as amounting to the value of 64,000,000 of dollars per annum. The opulence introduced through this means is vastly augmented by the produce of the rich mineral fields of Pennsylvania, which here finds an outlet. As has been hinted, New York has taken the place of Philadelphia as the leading entrepôt of commerce in the States—an event traceable in some degree to its readier access from Europe, but principally to the opening of the Erie Canal, and other channels of communication with the 'Great West.' Neglectful of its interests in this respect, and with capital directed to mining industry, Philadelphia has seen its rival on the Hudson outstrip it in the race of prosperity. At length, awakened to a sense of their danger, and recovered from a temporary financial depression, the Philadelphians are going ahead at a great rate, and it will behove New York to look to its laurels. No Atlantic city can ever take a commanding position, if unprovided with a direct and easy access to the valleys of the Ohio and Mississippi, and the great lake-countries on the north. Philadelphia has found that out, and by means of railways recently opened, is busied in getting back the traffic which it ought never to have parted with. One thing, however, is wanting. Reposing on the west on the one side, it will need to cultivate an intercourse with England on the other. The Delaware must be the port of entry and departure of first-class steamers in weekly communication with Southampton or Liverpool; for at present, no inconsiderable portion of the goods and passengers for Philadelphia require, for the sake of speed, to go round by New York—a circumstance attended with numerous inconveniences. I believe the Delaware—a massive river, and presenting miles of frontage for traffic—is fitted to bear with safety, to and from the ocean, vessels of any burden; and with such an estuary, and such internal resources, it would be difficult to assign a limit to its greatness.

I left Philadelphia with more regret than I had experienced in departing from any other city in America. As regards good organisation, refinement, and prosperity, the only eastern city fit to be named with it, is Boston; and when I add Toronto, the three seats of population are mentioned, which, according to my fancy, offer the attractions usually sought for by a class of emigrants whose aim goes beyond mere money-making or the ordinary necessities of existence. Philadelphia, though not picturesque, is invested with charms to invite the settlement of the enterprising, the tasteful, and the moderately opulent. In the far northern townships, the severity of winter and the brevity of summer may repel the fastidious in climate; but nothing is left to pine for on the banks of the lovely Schuylkill or the noble Delaware. Even the idler, who needs the habitual solacement of his clubs, his whist-parties, his conversaziones, and his billiards, will have no difficulty in discovering the objects of his search in Philadelphia.

Hastening northwards, by a railway train which took me through Trenton, the scene of Washington's famous exploit, after crossing the Delaware on the night of Christmas 1776, I arrived in New York a day

or two before my departure for England; and here I may pause to make some general observations suggested by my excursion.

W. C.

MY ARABIC MASTERS.

PECULIAR circumstances rendered it advisable, if not necessary, that I should gain some knowledge of Arabic: no matter what these circumstances were; they belong to my private history, which I am not going to relate; and this paper is merely intended as a description of two singular characters that passed before my eyes in the world's diorama.

I had for some time worked at the above language by myself, but with the exception of becoming familiar with the character, and learning a few phrases by heart, I made little progress, so different was it from anything with which I was already acquainted. The prospect of a change of residence prevented me from having a master at that time; but soon after my husband and myself were settled in Paris, our inquiries for an instructor in Arabic were answered by a friend, who said he had one to recommend, who was not a native of the East, but a Hungarian, and who was reckoned one of the first of modern linguists: I must, however, put up with his strange eccentricities. The eccentricities were rather an inducement than otherwise; and Mr L—— presented him to my husband in due form. He accepted his terms, which in themselves were unlike all others. He said he never gave more than one lesson per week, but he always left his pupils plenty of exercises for the intermediate time; and that this solitary lesson was given on a Monday. His name was Mandelli, which we thought at the time was not at all Hungarian in sound. He talked much of his family; he told us they were peasants; but from what afterwards fell from him, we found that the father cultivated his own land, and lived in the greatest possible comfort. One of his great delights was to speak of the evening concerts performed by his relations, who played on various instruments; and of the delicious cakes his mother made. The butter-cake was, according to his account, the most exquisite thing that was ever tasted: and why he left all these luxuries, we could never clearly make out. To us, he said his father thwarted his love of learning, and in every way opposed his propensities, so he had left home without telling any one, walking forth into the world by himself, and leaving no trace of his route. He had since communicated with his family, but had no intention of returning till he had acquired all the knowledge he thought necessary. We suspected he might not be telling us the whole truth; but he never conversed on politics, never spoke of the public affairs of his country, never complained; and, in fact, we heard much more of Hungary from an Austrian friend, whose early stored mind led him to foresee all that has more recently happened in that country, and whose predictions we have lived to see verified.

Mandelli told us he had set forth without making any preparation, with but little money in his pocket; and he did not suppose he was missed, for he had eleven brothers and sisters. He must have occasionally suffered much; but he had met with great kindness and encouragement during the series of years in which he had been away. He had traversed a part of Russia and Poland, always on foot, and at last arrived in Germany. How he supported himself we never could understand; but he had held discourses at, and written theses for, every university in Germany of any consequence. The freedom of access which a scholar enjoys on the continent, was at that time so striking and new to us, that we were never weary of listening to his details, or the account he gave of the persons of note with whom he became acquainted in the public libraries. At that of the Institute of France, he had

met with our friend Mr L——, who had been much interested by his appearance and conversation.

Mandelli was very remarkable in person; and since I saw a procession of Hungarians got up to meet Kossuth, I have been more inclined to believe that Hungary gave him birth, there was so strong a national resemblance between him and the persons above mentioned, although none of them equalled him in beauty. His grand head was covered with thick clustering curls, which, however, were getting gray; his forehead was straight and high, and his perceptive faculties were largely developed; his great dark eyes were full of expression; his high classical nose rendered his profile beautiful; his teeth were regular, but much stained with the filthy substances he was continually smoking, which were not always tobacco; his upper lip and the whole chin were covered with the most remarkable curling beard I ever beheld, which descended far upon his breast.

'This beard,' he used to say, 'has often saved my life.' 'How?' I exclaimed.

He replied: 'When I have no money, I have only to offer to sit to an artist for it, and he will always give me one or two francs.' His stature was six feet three, and his proportions those of immense strength; he was remarkably upright and dignified, carrying his glorious 'head on high'; but as to the softer graces, he had none. His voice was loud, and rather harsh; and I always fancied it would burst in thundering indignation from that capacious chest. He was, however, generally speaking, very calm and composed, though now and then his eyes would sparkle with fire. He reminded me strongly of the ancient busts of the Thunderer; and I longed to put a drapery over him, and a wreath round his head, and call him Jupiter Tonans. His age appeared to be about thirty-five; and certainly he owed nothing to the advantages of the toilet.

Wishing to get a pupil for Mandelli, Mr L—— told him he must be better dressed; and the Hungarian replied, he had not the means of getting other clothes; whereupon Mr L—— raised money among his friends and from his own pocket, and fitted Mandelli out handsomely. As long as the lessons continued, he made a most respectable appearance; but no sooner were they over, than the master again began to get very shabby; and at last he sent a note to his good friend, begging him to come speedily to his assistance, as he was in great trouble. Mr L—— went, and found he had been taken up on suspicion of having stolen a pair of boots. Mandelli confessed that he had parted with his good clothes, piece by piece, for books; and when he offered the boots, the tradesman said it was impossible for one of his appearance to have come honestly by them, and he was detained on suspicion of being a thief. Mr L—— soon settled the matter; and as he walked away with Mandelli, he expostulated with him. 'If you will get me the dress of an invalid soldier,' said the latter, 'I will wear it for ever.' Accordingly, the gray trousers, waistcoat, and frock-coat were procured; and in this fashion he presented himself as my master. I now forget whether he had a cap or a hat, for I recollect him only as bareheaded. He wore no linen; and by way of cravat, had a dirty red cotton handkerchief round his throat, tied in a knot; nor did he wear stockings; and his bare ankles peeped out between his trousers and his coarse thick shoes, tied with string.

As Mandelli lived and lodged upon the weekly five francs he received for my lesson, it will be supposed that his food was not of the choicest description. He bought it every week, on the Monday morning, at the market, where it was set out on small plates, having been collected from the restaurateurs. It was not always sweet; but this was a matter of indifference to Mandelli. I, however, could not arrive at so desirable a pitch of apathy; so he generally took it out

of his pocket, and left it in the anteroom. This was one day omitted; and as he sat unusually near the fire, the heat soon extracted the perfume of the viands. My olfactory nerves being dreadfully assailed, I tried to make my escape: this, however, proved impracticable, and I fell before I reached the door. He was much distressed, and promised he would not again bring his food with him. I tried to persuade him: it was very unwholesome for himself; but he laughed, and said he was used to it; and when I looked at his stalwart person, I could not press him on that point. I then turned upon him, and urged the want of cleanliness; but he assured me, that as long as he kept his person clean, it was of no consequence what he swallowed. His person! thought I; I do not believe he knows the use of soap.

A few days after the above conversation, I had a proof that my surmise was correct. I shewed him a bottle of curious honey, which had never congealed, even in a very low temperature. He let the bottle slip through his hand, and trying to save some of the contents, as the glass lay broken on the floor, he covered his fingers with the honey. I ordered soap and water to be brought to him; but so completely ignorant was he of the former, that I had to shew him how to use it. He assured me that he every day bathed in the Seine, or washed himself at one of the fountains of the street, and insisted on the uselessness of any other mode of ablution.

Highly cultivated as was the mind of Mandelli, and great as were his acquirements, he was full of prejudices. He had learned Russ, Polish, and German, in the countries where these languages are spoken; Italian was natural to him; modern Greek, he had obtained from neighbours; French, from his intercourse with those people; Arabic, from books, and learned professors at the universities; Spanish, from a friend; and English he had acquired by attaching himself to our troops when the allied armies had possession of Paris. He hovered about the spot where they bivouacked, waited on them, bargained for them, and only asked, as his reward, that they would teach him English. He aimed at mathematics, and was teaching himself in a roundabout way; and my husband, who was a very fair mathematician, offered to instruct him; but Mandelli became impatient at what he called shackles, and shook off his instructor. He was desirous of understanding the classification of plants, according to the natural system; but the moment he heard that all those grouped into one family did not bear the same appearance, he would not continue the study. His Arabic was the western, or that chiefly found in books, which suited me best; but even here his peculiarities interposed, and he taught me much that was useless. The fine arts had no interest for him, in spite of his family concerts, in which he had not taken any part; and it always seemed as if the act of learning was his enjoyment, and not the application of what he learned.

The winter of Mandelli's attendance upon me was the second after a sojourn of some years in a warm climate, and which is always the worst to bear. It was not, then, to be wondered at that I cowered over the fire, and crouched at the chimney-corner, looking over my lesson. Mandelli one day found me thus. He was amused at my chilliness, and boasted that he never suffered from cold. 'How do you manage to keep yourself warm?' I asked.

'I never have a fire,' he answered; 'but I put my bed-cover over my shoulders' [I daresay it was something like a horse-rug], 'and my legs into a tall basket which reaches to my knees, and which I have filled with hay.'

In this manner did the strange Hungarian pass through the inclement winter; when, if he had chosen to depart from his established rules, he might, by his talents, have had most of the comforts of life. Some

alleviation, however, occurred when the cold was at the worst, for he told us he had found a companion, who shared his room and his bed, and paid half his rent; he was free from him all day when he was at his work; but he returned at night, when he should be very comfortable, if the young man was not always trying experiments.

One of the experiments of Mandelli's friend was to make a water-bed; and, after a great many trials, he succeeded in accomplishing a waterproof covering which did not leak, and to perfect which, he was obliged to have a fire. When ready, the young man borrowed a boiler, and heated the water over the fire, as he imagined it was necessary to put it in hot. By degrees the bed was filled, the tube closed, and tightly screwed, and the smaller man of the two laid himself down upon it. 'O Mandelli, make haste to bed,' he exclaimed; 'it is delicious!' The giant form of Mandelli, however, was too much for the material: he stretched himself upon it—crack went the covering, and the room was deluged. He told us this the next morning, almost convulsed with laughter, although his clothes were even then wet, they having been soused when the bed was burst; and a second suit was much too great a luxury for Mandelli.

We did not like to dismiss my instructor, and yet it was desirable to take another master. My husband, therefore, employed him to write for him on the same terms as those given for the lesson. We were not, of course, aware of it, but this was an employment he detested; he therefore found another pupil, and took his leave. We, I presume, unwittingly affronted him, for he never came near us again; and a few years after, when I returned to Paris, I heard that he had left that city; and as our friend, Mr L—, was gone to live in Russia, I never heard anything more of Mandelli. Events of public interest had entirely banished the poor student from the memory of the Parisians.

My second instructor was a complete contrast to the first: he was a short, mercurial man; a Copt by birth; never at rest; never long in good-humour. He was induced by gratitude to a mutual friend of ours, and by the piquancy of teaching a lady, to give me two lessons per week. He generally clothed himself in the best of European costume, only retaining the fez. It was necessary, before each lesson, to coax him into the mood for it. He was employed by the French government to translate Arabic manuscripts, and had married a French wife, over whom he tyrannised according to the prescribed rules of an Eastern despot. She was a gentle, sad-looking person, much afraid of her husband, and shewed me a great deal of kindness. Her husband's greatest friend was a certain learned marquis, who seemed to possess much influence over him, and to whom she frequently appealed in his fits of ill-temper. To me, he was exceedingly polite, and yet more than once I felt he had not exerted himself as he ought to have done. In order to secure his services, I was obliged to go to him; and I dared not be one moment behind my time, or even venture to send an excuse for non-attendance, when bodily suffering would otherwise have kept me back. He never would have kept his appointments had I trusted to his coming to my rooms.

A heavy fall of snow, a sudden thaw, and a still more sudden frost, during the night, rendered the streets of Paris impassable to carriages, and difficult for foot-passengers. It was the morning for my lesson from Ellious, and I resisted all the persuasions that were used to detain me at home. My husband, as well as myself, knowing his ticklish temper, would not say a word for or against; but the friend who tried to dissuade me, after vainly giving me an exaggerated account of the weather, insisted on my swallowing some hot soup before I set out; and so, armed with warmth within and warmth without, I sallied forth.

With considerable management, I contrived to keep my footing; but I never shall forget the painful sensations with which I crossed the Luxembourg Gardens, tempted to leave the shelter of the streets by its being the shortest way. I slipped along rather than walked; the tears forced themselves out of my eyes, and froze upon my veil. Benumbed, and ready to drop, I reached Ellious's door, and had scarcely strength to lift the heavy knocker of the gate. The portress pulled the string, never dreaming of putting her nose beyond her lodge; but Ellious's wife had her door opened ready for me, and as I staggered inside, loaded me with kindness. By degrees, she admitted me into the heated apartment of the Copt; and there I beheld him, pipe in mouth, a white turban on his head, a gray jacket trimmed with dark fur on his shoulders, seated in bed. He was delighted at my appearance, but it was not without some feeling of apprehension I saw him prepare to get out of bed. He gave his hookah to his wife, threw down the bed-clothes, sprang out with alacrity, and to my great comfort, displayed a pair of full yellow silk trousers and red slippers. He drew two chairs to the fire, and said: 'I waited breakfast for you.' I was not sorry to hear that he had done so, for visions of hot coffee floated before my eyes. My readers may judge of my disappointment, when Mrs Ellious brought in oysters and champagne! Satisfied, however, of the necessity of compliance with my master's strange tastes, on such a day, I swallowed my second breakfast with as good a grace as possible. He never was more eloquent: he praised my Arabic writing, he repeated Arabic poetry, and I never after lost his good opinion. Some months elapsed, and I left the country, and never saw him again.

I afterwards surprised some Moors by my slender acquirements, because their females have none; but disuse has caused the whole of my learning to pass away. It is not, however, as if it had never been: the pleasure with which I read some of the stories from the *Arabian Nights* in the original has never been effaced, and the increased feeling for, and comprehension of Scriptural writings, is a precious boon, for which I can never be too thankful.

HOW TO MAKE SEA-WATER.

OUR readers are already aware that the curious family of sea-weeds has been successfully introduced to cultivation, and not in public gardens merely, but likewise as domestic pets, that may in time displace the long-cherished geranium and fuchsia on the mechanic's window-sill. At present, however, this kind of gardening is chiefly occupying the attention of natural history students, who find in the Marine Vivarium an excellent means of observing the development and habits of a class of organised beings, both vegetable and animal, which, as living objects, have hitherto eluded their direct researches. The recent appointment of one of the most distinguished of living zoologists to occupy the chair of Natural History in the Edinburgh University, has, during the past summer, had a wonderful effect in arousing the enthusiasm of Scottish naturalists, and of spreading a taste for such pursuits in quarters where it was unknown before. The beautiful zoophytes, crabs, molluscs, and 'sea-flowers' collected in the professor's dredging-trips, have put Vivaria greatly into requisition; so much so, that they are becoming by no means unusual drawing-room ornaments in Edinburgh and other parts of Scotland; while in England, the taste for them—emanating from the Regent's Park Zoological Garden—has advanced with even greater rapidity.

Those naturalists who have the good-fortune to reside by the sea-shore, are able to give their ocean-treasures a daily supply of fresh sea-water, and thus

preserve them in unimpaired health. Not so with the unfortunate inland resident, who, despite the best of management, and the nicest 'balance of power' between the proportions of animal and vegetable life in his little world, occasionally finds the briny element to lose its sweetness, and thus lead to the sacrifice of his long-cherished treasures. To the poet, 'a thing of beauty is a joy for ever'—but not to the naturalist. 'Necessity, however, is the mother of invention;' and Mr Gosse, as her instrument in the present instance, has pointed out how the inland naturalist may dispense with the ocean, and manufacture sea-water for himself.*

But the naturalist and marine-gardener will not be allowed to enjoy a monopoly of this invention. Sea-water has other uses than the nurture of parlour pets in a glass-vase; and uses more important too, we fancy whispered by some gouty gentleman, who, throwing physic to the dogs, has given his faith to sea-bathing. Such considerations induce us to bring some of Mr Gosse's details before the notice of our readers. The inconvenience, delay, and expense attendant upon the procuring of sea-water from the coast or from the ocean, Mr Gosse long ago felt to be a great difficulty in the way of a general adoption of the Marine Aquarium. 'Even in London,' says he, 'it is an awkward and precarious matter; how much more in inland towns and country places, where it must always prove not only a hindrance, but, to the many, an insuperable objection. The thought had occurred to me, that as the constituents of sea-water are known, it might be practicable to manufacture it, since all that seemed necessary was to bring together the salts in proper proportion, and add pure water till the solution was of the proper specific gravity. Several scientific friends, to whom I mentioned my thoughts, expressed their doubts of the possibility of the manufacture, and one or two went so far as to say that it had been tried, but that it had been found not to answer; that though it looked like sea-water, tasted, smelt like the right thing, yet it would not support animal life. Still, I could not help saying, with the lawyers: "If not, why not?"'

Mr Gosse took Schweitzer's analysis of sea-water for his guide. In 1000 grains of sea-water taken off Brighton, it gave:—Water, 964.744; chloride of sodium, 27.059; chloride of magnesium, 3.666; chloride of potassium, 0.765; bromide of magnesium, 0.029; sulphate of magnesia, 2.295; sulphate of lime, 1.407; carbonate of lime, 0.033. Total, 999.998.

The bromide of magnesium, and the carbonate of lime, he neglected from the minuteness of their quantities—the former is not found in the water of the Mediterranean—and the sulphate of lime he likewise ventured to omit, on account of its extreme insolubility and the smallness of the quantity contained in the Mediterranean water. The component parts were thus reduced to four, which he used in the following quantities:—Common table salt, 3½ ounces; Epsom salts, ½ ounce; chloride of magnesium, 200 grains troy; chloride of potassium, 40 grains troy. To these, four quarts of water were added. The cost was about 5½d. per gallon; but if large quantities were made, it would be reduced to a maximum of 5d. per gallon.

His manufacture took place on the 21st of April. On the following day he poured off about half the quantity (filtering it through a sponge in a glass funnel), into a confectioner's show-glass; covering the bottom with small shore-pebbles, well washed in fresh water, and one or two fragments of stone, with fronds of green sea-weed (*Ulva latissima*) growing thereon. 'I would not at once venture upon the admission of animals,' says he, 'as I wished the water to be first somewhat impregnated with the scattered spores of the

* *Annals and Magazine of Natural History*, July 1854.

ulva; and I thought, that if any subtle elements were thrown off from growing vegetables, the water should have the advantage of it before the entrance of animal life. This, too, is the order of nature: plants first, then animals. A coating of the green spores was soon deposited on the sides of the glass; and bubbles of oxygen were copiously thrown off every day under the excitement of the sun's light. After a week, therefore, I ventured to put in animals, consisting of species of *Actinia*, *Bowerbankia*, *Cellularia*, *Balanus*, *Serpula*, &c., along with some red sea-weeds. The whole thrived and flourished from day to day, manifesting the highest health and vigour, which induced the addition of extra specimens to the Vivarium.

After the lapse of a sufficient time to test thoroughly the adaptability of the manufactured water to the exigencies of its inhabitants, Mr Gosse thus reports:— 'Six weeks have now elapsed since the introduction of the animals. I have just carefully searched over the jar as well as I could do it without disturbing the contents. I find every one of the species and specimens in high health, with the exception of some of the *Polysoa*—namely, *Crisea aculeata*, *Cellepora pumicosa*, and *Pediclellina Belgica*. These I cannot find, and I therefore conclude that they have died out; though, if I chose to disturb the stones and weeds, I might possibly detect them. These trifling defalcations do in no wise interfere with the conclusion, that the experiment of manufacturing sea-water for the aquarium has been perfectly successful.'

OUR SONNETEERS.

IX looking back on those rhymists who have given us thoughts and images worthy of lasting remembrance within the narrow compass of fourteen lines, we are by no means disposed to adopt the Johnsonian reading of the word sonneteer, as implying 'a small or petty poet.' To countenance such a heresy, would be to proclaim that, while 'brevity is the soul of wit,' diffuseness is the spirit of poetry. All our best poets, those whose more extended flights of genius have been the happiest, have excelled in the sonnet—witness Shakespeare, Spenser, Milton, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, and numerous others among our own prized English writers, to say nothing of Petrarch and his brother poets abroad. Within the restricted fourteen lines, the cause of the despised sonnet has been nobly defended by the poet Wordsworth—

Scorn not the Sonnet: critic, you have frowned,
Mindless of its just honours: with this key
Shakespeare unlocked his heart; the melody
Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound;
A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound;
Camœns soothed with it an exile's grief;
The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle-leaf
Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned
His visionary brow: a glowworm lamp,
It cheered mild Spenser, called from Faery-land
To struggle through dark ways; and, when a damp
Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
The thing became a trumpet, whence he blew
Soul-animating strains—alas, too few!

The sonnet, from its very brevity, and from its completeness within itself, has an advantage over other forms of poetry—in its power of readily ingrafting itself on the memory; and, when in its perfection, it possesses a charming succession of cadences which find their echo in the awakened poetic sense, long after its music has died upon the ear. Who can read aloud Milton's fine sonnet on the *Massacre in Piemont*, without feeling stirred as by the clang of some far-off battle? With

the opening lines, the majestic flow of the verse sweeps over the sense with a peal like the distant roll of artillery—

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold!
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones,
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese that rolled
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundredfold, who, having learned thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian war.

Even those master-minds that, in spite of their undoubted claim to the divinity of poetic inspiration, have been justly accused of obscurity and mysticism in their more prolonged efforts, have yet rayed out perfectly clear and transparent when using the sonnet form of versification as the medium of thought. The more ambitious works of these brilliant but fitful geniuses confuse us with their very wealth of imagery and wild licence of commingling fancies. To attempt to fathom their 'deep obscure' is bewildering. It is like gazing on a summer-night sky when the myriads of heaven's lesser lights are glancing, crowd upon crowd, from the deep blue above us, till the sense aches with the diffused splendour of those countless worlds of beauty. But, closer to the moon's orb, we see perchance some planet of a more distinct and concentrated glory—and here we have a type of that gem of poetic creation, the 'scorned' and despised sonnet. Within its narrow scope of words, but wide-reaching realm of thought, the singer no longer runs heedlessly after a meteoric fantasy: he has neither time nor space to go in search of a mere Will-o'-the-wisp. The Puck of Fancy, that freaksome, tricky sprite, must be caught, caged, and tamed: Imagination must be the slave, Reason the lord-paramount of the hour. With all Coleridge's unquestioned power, we can hardly persuade ourselves that the following sonnet is from his hand:—

Gently I took that which ungently came,
And without scorn forgave: do thou the same.
A wrong done to thee think a cat's-eye spark
Thou wouldst not see, were not thine own heart dark.
Thine own keen sense of wrong that thirsts for sin,
Fear that—the spark self-kindled from within,
Which, blown upon, will blind thee with its glare,
Or, smothered, stifle thee with noisome air.
Clap on the extinguisher, pull up the blinds,
And soon the ventilated spirit finds
Its natural daylight. If a foe have kened,
Or, worse than foe, an alienated friend,
A rib of dry-rot in thy ship's stout side,
Think it God's message, and in humble pride
With heart of oak replace it—thine the gains—
Give him the rotten timber for his pains!

What a world of forceful thought lies here! These are the truths that speak to the soul through the medium of a few ringing words, more powerfully than all the field-preaching in the universe. Who, after reading those words, could go incontinently and commit an unworthy action? There is a sonnet of Byron's, whose recollection lingers with us in our moments of higher musing, and which exhibits a striking instance of a poet's power to exalt and ennoble, through an appeal to the better portion of our nature. We allude to the

sonnet addressed to George IV. upon the reversal of the attainer of Lord Edward Fitzgerald:—

To be the father of the fatherless,
To stretch the hand from the throne's height, and raise
His offspring, who expired in other days
To make thy sire's sway by a kingdom less—
This is to be a monarch, and repress
Envy into unutterable praise.
Dismiss thy guard, and trust thee to such traits,
For who would lift a hand, except to bless?
Were it not easy, sir, and is't not sweet
To make thyself beloved? and to be
Omnipotent by mercy's means? For thus
Thy sovereignty would grow but more complete;
A despot thou, and yet thy people free,
And by the heart, not hand, enslaving us.

Once more to quote Wordsworth, the most prolific of our modern sonneteers, we would instance his description of a London morning in a sonnet composed on Westminster Bridge, as a proof of the power residing in this species of composition, to present a perfect picture, which shall leave its trace indelibly on the mind, or to enforce the impress of some single feeling never to be effaced. You stand with the poet where he stood—on that bridge spanning the waters; you see with his eyes and feel with his heart. The smoke of the great city is not. You hail 'the beauty of the morning' in its clear, unsullied glory, rising over the sleeping city-world. The hush of a deep repose, undisturbed yet by the noisy jar of crowding life and riot cares, rests wherever the gazer turns. You feel, with your spirit-guide—for such ever is the true poet, and Wordsworth is of the truest—that around and about on every side lie the dwellings of fellow-mortals; for it is in the, *here* pardonable, familiarity of the epithet, 'dear God,' that you are made to feel at once that you are looking not alone on empty 'towers, domes, and temples,' but where the 'mighty heart' of humanity is beating silently in many a slumbering homestead.

Earth has not anything to shew more fair.
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty.
This city now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields and to the sky—
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

After such instances as are here given of the higher and nobler purposes to which this same 'pipe' has been tuned, we hesitate—however heretical may appear such a dereliction of our bounden duty as his true worshippers—to introduce a single specimen of the sonnets of Shakespeare. Beautiful as these small niche-images are, they yet shew insignificant beside the colossal figures of his dramatic canvas. Shakespeare, whose every line could be pregnant, when he so willed, needed not to present to us men's minds cramped within the focus of this 'glowworm lamp.' The rarest dissector, and wisest and most profound expositor of the human heart, shews, in his indulgence of the sonnet form of composition, like a very Achilles sporting and trifling with his own strength—a hero in his softest mood, discoursing sweet harmony by means of this 'small lute,' while toying with Amarylus in the shade. The form in which poets of less transcendent genius have embodied their loftiest aspirations, was to him but the outlet of personal feeling—the only escape for, and relief to, that natural egotism

which never obtruded itself into the higher conceptions of his genius. As such, they have a value independent of their extreme intrinsic beauty; but being so, are rather the body-efigy than spirit-mind of the Swan of Avon. For the present, therefore, we resign them to that 'Silence,' at once eloquent and dumb, which has been so aptly and well depicted by the pen of Richard Flecknoe:—

Still-born Silence! thou that art
Floodgate of the deeper heart;
Offspring of a heavenly kind,
Frost o' the mouth, and thaw o' the mind;
Secrecy's confidant, and he
That makes religion mystery;
Admiration's speakingest tongue—
Leave, thy desert shades among,
Reverend hermits' hallowed cells,
Where retired devotion dwells—
With thy enthusiasms come,
Seize our hearts, and strike us dumb!

TOYS AND GAMES OF DIFFERENT NATIONS.

I was amused here by watching a child playing with a popgun, made of bamboo, similar to that of quill, with which most English children are familiar, which propels pellets by means of a spring-trigger made of the upper part of the quill. It is easy to conclude such resemblances between the familiar toys of different countries to be accidental; but I question their being really so. On the plains of India, men may often be seen for hours together flying what with us are children's kites; and I procured a Jews-harp from Tibet. These are not the toys of savages, but the amusements of people more than half-civilised, and with whom we have had indirect communication from the earliest ages. The Lepehas play at quoits, using slates for the purpose; and at the Highland games of 'putting the stone' and 'drawing the stone.' Chess, dice, draughts, hockey, and battle-door and shuttle-cock, are all Indo-Chinese or Tatarian; and no one familiar with the wonderful instances of similarity between the monasteries, ritual, ceremonies, attributes, vestments, and other paraphernalia of the Eastern and Western Churches, can fail to acknowledge the importance of recording even the most trifling analogies or similarities between the manners and customs of the young as well as of the old.—*Himalayan Journal.*

YOUTHFULNESS OF PUBLIC MEN IN ENGLAND.

I could not help thinking, as I looked around on so many men whom I had heard of historically all my life, how very much less they bear the marks of age than men who have been connected a similar length of time with the movements of our country. This appearance of youthfulness and alertness has a constantly deceptive influence upon one in England. I cannot realise that people are as old as history states them to be. In the present company, there were men of sixty or seventy, whom I should have pronounced, at first glance, to be fifty. Generally speaking, our working-minds seem to wear out their bodies faster, perhaps because our climate is more stimulating; more, perhaps, from the intense stimulus of our political régime, which never leaves anything long at rest. The tone of manners in this distinguished circle did not obtrude itself upon my mind as different from that of highly-educated people in our own country. It appeared simple, friendly, natural, and sincere. They talked like people who thought of what they were saying rather than how to say it. The practice of thorough culture and good-breeding is substantially the same through the world, though smaller conventionalities may differ.—*Mrs Stowe's Sunny Memories.*

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